

and not allow us to retail the fuel as we should—there are outrageous stories of them not allowing the prices to be posted or the pumps to be put in. There are only 1,200 ethanol pumps in this country and 320 of them are in my State, but who is counting. If we are going to move forward with biomass and with our own energy, we have to allow this industry to develop.

When I talk to farmers across our State, what they like most about the 2002 farm bill is the safety net and the way it worked. It worked well for the first time in a long time. What we did with this farm bill was basically allow that safety net to stay in place and also rebalance the commodity programs to be more equitable for some northern crops such as wheat, oats, barley, soybeans, and canola.

I met with our wheat and barley growers a few hours ago. They are one of the many groups that care a lot about this. Again, they revitalized a lot of the areas of our State that had been troubled because of the fact that we have a thriving rural economy.

Another top priority for Minnesota farmers was creating a permanent program for disaster assistance. I thank Senator BAUCUS and the Finance Committee for their work in this area. Farmers are tired of coming back to Congress every year with a tin cup. We have been hit by drought, flooding, and everything in between. They had to wait for 3 years for Congress to pass the ad hoc disaster relief bill, and the permanent program of disaster relief will give farmers the security they need in moving forward.

I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who are from farm States to think about the importance of this disaster program for their States.

The farm bill is not, as we know, just about the commodity programs and the safety net. It is also about energy. It is also, as I mentioned, about biofuels. I mentioned the cellulosic piece of it that is so important. It also includes bipartisan legislation Senator CRAPO and I introduced to double the mandatory funding for the Biodiesel Education Program. Spreading the word about biodiesel to drivers and gas stations is very important if we are going to help that industry. Again, I urge every Senator who wants less dependence on foreign oil to look at the energy portion of this farm bill.

One of the things that has plagued our rural communities in the last decade or so is the inability for younger people to get involved in farming. The committee accepted my amendment to improve the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Program. There are real opportunities today to start out in farming, especially in growing areas such as organic farming and energy production. But beginning farmers also face big obstacles, including limited access to credit and technical assistance and the high price of land.

The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Programs in this farm bill provide

mentoring and outreach for new farmers and training in business planning and credit building—the skills they need to succeed and to stay on the land. If you are concerned because you have seen fewer and fewer young people going into farming in your State, I urge you to move this bill forward.

As I said, there are a lot of good things for Minnesota and for our country in this farm bill. There is, however, one area that needs reform and that is that we need to stop urban millionaires from pocketing farm subsidies intended for hard-working farmers. Here are the facts in our State. Minnesota is the sixth largest agricultural-producing State in the Nation and, I would add, as we approach Thanksgiving, the No. 1 turkey producer in our country. I was able to judge a race recently between a Minnesota turkey and a Texas turkey at the King Turkey Days in Worthington, MN, and I would like to report that the Minnesota turkey won the race. The Texas turkey got too cold and had to be carried over the finish line.

Minnesota, as I said, is the sixth largest agricultural-producing State in the Nation. Nationally, 60 farms have collected more than \$1 million each under the 2002 farm bill. None of them are in our State. The average income for Minnesota farms, after expenses, is \$54,000, but under the current system, a part-time farmer can have an income as high as \$2.5 million from outside sources and still qualify for Federal benefits.

I very strongly support this farm bill, but I also believe we need some reform in this area because it makes no sense to hand out payments to multimillionaires when this money should be targeted to family farmers and conservation and nutrition and other programs under the farm bill. Right now, nearly 600 residents of New York City, 559 residents of Washington, DC, and even 21 residents of Beverly Hills 90210 received Federal farm checks in the past 3 years. Some collected hundreds of thousands of dollars.

We have the opportunity to fix this in this farm bill because the administration has not been doing its job in enforcing the rules, so I say let's use this farm bill to do it. Already in this farm bill in both the House and the Senate we have gotten rid of the "three entity" rule, of which there is much abuse. The House bill does contain some income eligibility limits. I believe it is \$1 million for a full-time farmer, \$500,000 for the part-time farmer. We, in this farm bill, have an ability to go further, as I suggested, with an amendment for \$750,000 for full time and \$250,000 part time. The Dorgan-Grassley amendment, which passed this Chamber in the past, would keep subsidy levels at \$250,000. You put that in this farm bill. If we don't have this farm bill, if our colleagues will not allow the Senate to proceed, if we are not allowed to make this reform which the administration has not enforced on

its own—I believe this is a great opportunity for us.

For the reasons I laid out there for the energy title, which is forward thinking, for the conservation title, which is more funding and much more aggressive look at conservation, for the nutrition title, where we are finally promoting our fruits and vegetables and are doing new things to promote more healthy kids—these are all things that are different about this farm bill. If we rest on our laurels and don't do anything new, we are not going to be able to move in the direction we want for the energy revolution in this country.

When my daughter did a project for sixth grade on biofuels last year, she actually drew a map of the State of Minnesota.

She had two little dots that said "Minneapolis" and "St. Paul," then she had a big circle that said "Pine City, the home of farmer Tom Peterson." That is whom she had talked to about biofuels.

I tell you this story because the future for our economy in Minnesota and across the country, when you look at energy, the rural part of our country is going to have a big piece of this. It is necessary for that development.

If we do not pass this farm bill, we are not going to get there. I urge my colleagues, for that and many other reasons, to move forward with the 2007 farm bill.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENT—H.R. 1429

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 3:30 p.m. today, the Senate proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 1429, Head Start Authorization; that it be considered under the following limitations; that there be 60 minutes of debate with respect to the conference report, with the time equally divided and controlled between the chair and ranking member of the HELP Committee, or their designees; that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate proceed to vote on adoption of the conference report without further intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 3:30 p.m.

Thereupon, at 2:01 p.m., the Senate recessed until 3:30 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. SANDERS).

IMPROVING HEAD START FOR SCHOOL READINESS ACT OF 2007—CONFERENCE REPORT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 1429, which the clerk will report by title.